

CLAIMS

1. A communications network including an originating Real Time Data over IP host and a terminating Real Time Data over IP host between which communication is to be effected, the network also including
5 communication control means for at least receiving information relating to the communication, characterized in that the network also includes communication forwarding means which receives at least some data sent between the two Real Time Data over IP hosts and sends to the communication control means information relating to the communication.

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2. A network according to claim 1 wherein at least part of the network between the communication forwarding means and one of the Real Time Data over IP hosts is a Real Time Data over IP network. There is a second communication forwarding means, wherein the first communication
15 forwarding means is associated with anyone of the originating Real Time Data over IP host and the terminating Real Time Data over IP host and the second communication forwarding means is associated with the other.

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3. A network according to claim 2 including a plurality of communication forwarding means, wherein each of the Real Time Data over IP
20 hosts is connected to a selected one or respective ones of the communication forwarding means.

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4. A network according to any of the above claims wherein the or
25 each communication forwarding means includes translation means for translating an external reference of one or both of the hosts into an internal reference.

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5. A network according to claim 4 in which the translation means is
30 operable to translate a fixed IP address of the terminating Real Time Data over IP host into a dynamic IP address, for providing to the originating Real Time

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Data over IP host for the purposes of directing communication between the two hosts.

5 6. A network according to any of the above claims wherein the or each communication forwarding means also includes tracking means for measuring values of one or more predefined parameters related to the communication and the communication forwarding means also includes transmitting means for transmitting these values to a selected data receiver.

10 7. A network according to any of the above claims in which one or both of the Real Time Data over IP hosts includes message means for transmitting a message to the communication control means in order to indicate that a communication session is in progress.

15 8. Communication control means as claimed in any of the above claims.

 9. Communication forwarding means as claimed in any of claims 1 - 7.

20 10. A Real Time Data over IP host for use in a network according to any of claims 1 - 7.

25 11. A method of controlling communication on a communications network, wherein the network includes an originating Real Time Data over IP host and a terminating Real Time Data over IP host between which communication is to be effected, the network also including communication control means for receiving information relating to the communication, characterized in that the method includes the steps of:

30 (i) transmitting at least some data from the originating Real Time Data over IP host to a communication forwarding means;

(ii) using the communication forwarding means to direct communication between the Real Time Data over IP hosts; and

(iii) sending information relating to the communication from the communication forwarding means to the communication control means.